## LITTLE DORRIT IN TWO BOOKS.

CHARLES DICKENS.

CHAPTER IX. The morning light was in no hurry to elimb the prises wall and look in at the snuggery windows; and when it did come, it would have been more welcome it had come alone, instead of bringing a rush of rain with it. But the equinoctial gales were bowing out at sea, and the impartial south-west wind, in its flight, would not neglect even the narrow Marshakea. While it reared through the steeple of Saint George's Church, and twirled all the cowls in the neighborhood, it made a swoop to beat the Southwark smoke into the juli; and, plunging down the chimneys of the few early collegians who were yet lighting their fires, half sufficiented bem.

Arthur Clennam would have been little disposed to Arthur Clennam would have been little disposed to bager in bed, though his bed had been in a more private situation, and less affected by the raking out of yesterday's fire, the kindling of to-dav's under the collegiate boiler, the filling of that Spartan vessel at the pump, the sweeping and sawdusting of the common room, and other such preparations. Heartily glad to see the morning, though little rested by the night, he turned out as soon as he could distinguish objects about him, and paced the yard for two heavy hours before the gate was opened.

The walls were so near to one another, and the wild cleuds hurried over them so fast, that it gave him a sensation like the beginning of sea-sickness to look up

clouds burried over them so fast, that it gave him a sensation like the beginning of sea-sickness to look up at the gusty sky. The rain, carried aslant by flaws of wind, blackened that side of the central building which he had visited last night, but left a narrow dry trough under the lee of the wall, where he walked up and down among waifs of straw and dust and paper, the waste droppings of the pump, and the stray leaves of yesterday's greens. It was as haggard a view of life as a man need look upon.

Nor was it relieved by any gimpse of the little creature who had brought him there. Perhaps she glided

Nor was it relieved by any glimpse of the little creature who had brought him there. Perhaps she glided out of her doorway and in at that where her father lived, while his face was turned from both; but he saw nothing of her. It was too early for her brother; to have seen him once, was to have seen enough of him to know that he would be sluggish to leave whatever frowsy bed he occupied at night; so, as Arthur Clenam walked up and down, waiting for the gate to epen, he cast about in his mind for future rather than for present means of pursuing his discoveries.

open, he cast about in his mind for future rather than for present means of pursuing his discoveries.

At last the lodge-gate turned, and the turnkey, standing on the step, taking an early comb at his hair, was ready to let him out. With a joyful sense of release he passed through the lodge, and found himself again in the outer courtyard where he had spoken to the brother last night.

again in the outer contryard where he had spoken to the brother last night.

There was a string of people already straggling in, whom it was not difficult to identify as the nondescript messengers, go-betweens, and errandbearers of the place. Some of them had been lounging in the rain until the gate should open; others, who had timed their arrival with greater nicety, were coming up now, and passing in with damp whitey-brown paper bags from the grocers, leaves of bread, lumps of butter, eggs, milk, and the like. The shabbiness of these attendants upon shabbiness, the poverty of these insolvent waiters upon insolvency, was a sight to see. Such threadbare coats and trouvers, such fusty gowns and shawls, such of those manuscripts great mental disturbance, and no satisfaction. As they eved the stranger in passing, they eyed him with borrowing eyes—hungry, sharp, speculative as to his softness if they were accredited to him, and the likelihood of his standing something handsome. Mendicity on commission stooped in their high shoulders, shambled in their unsteady legs, buttoned and pinned and drawed and drawged their clothes, frayed their buttonholes, leaked out of their figures in dirty little ends of tape, and issued from their mouths in alcoholic breathings.

tape, and issued from their mouths in alcoholic breathings.

As these people passed him standing still in the courtyard, and one of them turned back to inquire if the could assist him with his services, it came into Arthur Clennam's mind that he would speak to Dorrit again before he went away. She would have recovered her first surprise, and might feel easier with him. He asked this member of the fraternity (who had two red herrings in his hand, and a lonf and a blacking-brush under his arm), where was the nearest place to get a cup of coffee at. The nondescript replied in encouraging terms, and brought him to a coffee shop in the street within a stone's throw.

"Do you know Miss Dorrit ?" asked the new client.

"Do you know Miss Dorrit?" asked the new client. The nondescript knew two Miss Dorrits; one who was born inside—That was the one! That was the one! The nondescript had known her for many years. In regard of the other Miss Dorrit, the nondescript lodged in the same house with herself and uncle.

This changed the client's half-formed design of remaining at the coffee-shop until the nondescript should bring him word that Dorrit had issued forth into the street. He intrusted the nondescript with a confidential message to her, importing that the visitor who had waited on her father last night, begged the favor of a few words with her at her nucle's lodgings; he obtained from the same source full directions to the house, which was very near; dismissed the nondescript thich was very near: dismissed the nondescript

bonse, which was very near; dismissed the nondescript gratified with half-a-crown: and having hastily refreshed himself at the coffee-shop, repaired with all speed to the clarionet-player's dwelling.

There were so many lodgers in this house, that the door-pest seemed to be as full of bell-handles as a ca thedral organ is of stope. Doubtful which might be the clarionet-stop, he was considering the point, when a shuttlecock flew out of the parlor window, and alighted on his hat. He then observed that in the parlor-window was a blind with the inscription, Mr. Cair-rigs's ACADEMY; also in another line, EVENING TUITION: and behind the blind was a little whitefaced boy, with a slice of bread and butter, and a battle-dore. The window being accessible from the footway, he looked in over the blind, returned the shuttlecock, and put his question.

"Dorrit?" said the little white faced boy (Master

put his question.

said the little white faced boy (Master let). "Mr. Dorrit? Third bell and one

knock."

The pupils of Mr. Cripples appeared to have been making a copy-book of the street door, it was so extensively scribbled over in pencil. The frequency of the inscriptions, "Old Dorrit," and "Dirty Dick," in combination, suggested intentions of personality on the part of Mr. Cripples's pupils. There was ample time to make these observations, before the door was opened by the old man himself.

"Ha!" said he, very slowly remembering Arthur,
"you were shut in last night!"
"Yes, Mr. Doritt. I hope to meet your niece here

presently."
"Oh!" said he, pondering. "Out of my brother's way? True. Would you come up stairs and wait for

"Thank you."

"Thank you."

Turning himself, as slowly as he turned in his mind whatever he heard or said, he led the way up the narrow stairs. The house was very close, and had an unwholesome smell. The little staircase windows looked in at the back windows of other houses as unwholein at the back windows of other houses as unwholecome as itself, with poles and lines thrust out of them,
on which unsightly linen hung; as if the inhabitants
were angling for clothes, and had had some wretched
bites not worth attending to. In the back garret—a
sickly room, with a turn-up bedstead in it, so hastily
and recently turned up that the blankets were boiling
over, as it were, and keeping the lid open—a half-finshed breakfast of coffee and toast, for two persons,
was jumbled down anyhow on a ricketty table.

There was no one there. The old man, numbling to
himself, after some consideration, that Fanny had run
away, went to the next room to fetch her back. The
visiter, observing that she held the door on the inside,
and that when the uncle tried to open it, there was a
sharp adjuration of "Don't, stupid!" and an appearance of lose stocking and fiannel, concluded that the
young lady was in an undress. The uncle, without
appearing to come to any conclusion, shuffled in again,

appearing to come to any conclusion, shuffled in again, sat down in his chair, and began warming his hands at the fire. Not that it was cold, or that he had any waking

whether it was cord, or the was the whether it was or not.
What did you taink of my brother, air !" he asked, in he, bye and bye, discovered what he was doing, off, reached over to the chimney-piece, and took claricoset case down.
I was glad," said Arthur, very much at a loss, for thoughts were on the brother before him; "to find

his thoughts were on the brother before him; "to find him so well and cheerful."
"Ha!" muttered the old man, "Yes, yes, yes, yes,

yes!"
Arthur wondered what he could possibly want with the clarionet case. He did not want it at all. He discovered, in due time, that it was not the little paper of sum (which was also on the chimney-piece), put it back again, took down the sand instead, and solaced humself with a pinch. He was as feeble, spare, and slow in his pinches as in everything else, but a certain hitle trickling of enjoyment of them played in the poor worn nerves about the corners of his eyes and mouth.

"Amy, Mr. Clennam. What do you think of her?"
"I am much impressed, Mr. Dorrit, by all that I have seen of her and thought of her."
"My brother would have been quite lost without

"My brother would have been quite lost without by," he returned. "We should all have been lost

without Amy. She is a very good girl, Amy.

does her duty."

Arthur fancied that he heard in these praises, tain tone of custom which he had heard from the hast night, with an inward protest and feeling of antag-onism. It was not that they stinted her praises, or were inschaible to what she did for them; but that they were larily habituated to her, as they were to all the rest of their condition. He fancied that although they had be-fore them, every day, the means of comparison between her and one another and themselves, they regarded her as being in her necessary place; as holding a position toward them all which belonged to her, like her name or her age. He fancied that they viewed her, not as

or her age. He fancied that they viewed her, not as appertaining to it; as being vaguely what they had a right to expect, and nothing more.

Her under resumed his breakfast, and was munching toest supped in coffee, oblivious of his guest, when the third bell rang. That was Amy, he said, and went down to let her in; leaving the visitor with as vivid a picture on his mind of his begrimed hands, dirt-worn face, and decayed figure, as if he were still drooping in his chair.

in his chair.

She came up after him, in the usual plain dress, and with the usual timid manner. Her lips were a little part d, as if her heart beat faster than usual. "Mr. Clemam, Amy," said her uncle, "has been ex-

pecting you some time."
"I took the liberty of sending you a message."

"Mr. Clemam, Amy," said her uncle, "has been expecting you some time."
"I took the liberty of sending you a message."
"I received the message, sir."
"Are you going to my mother's this morning? I think not, for it is past your usual hour."
"Not to-day, sir. I am not wanted to-day."
"Will you allow me to walk a little way in whatever direction you may be going? I can then speak to you as we walk, both without detaining you here, and without intruding longer here myself."
She looked embarrassed, but said, if he pleased. He made a pretense of having mielaid his walking-stick, to give her time to set the bedstead right, to answer her sister's impatient knock at the wall, and to say a word softly to her uncle. Then he found it, and they went down-stairs; she first, he following, the uncle standing at the stair-head, and probably forgetting item before they had reached the ground floor.

Mr. Cripples's pupils, who were by this time coming to echool, desisted from their merning recreation of cuffing one another with bags and books, to stare with all the eyes they had at a stranger who had been to see Dirty Dick. They bore the trying spectacle in silence, until the mysterious visitor was at a safe distance; when they burst into pebbles and yells, and likewise into reviling dances, and in all respects buried the pipe of peace with so many savage ceremonies, that if Mr. Cripples had been the chief of the Cripplewayboo tribe with the war-paint on, they could scarcely have done greater justice to their education.

In the midst of this homage, Mr. Arthur Clennam offered his arm to Little Dorrit, and Little Dorrit took it. "Will you go by the Iron Bridge," said he, "where there is an escape from the noise of the street!" Little Dorrit answered, if he pleased, and presently ventured to hope that he would "not mind" Mr. Cripples's boys, for she had herself received her education, such as it was, in Mr. Cripples's evening academy. He returned, with the best will in the world, that Mr. Cripples's boys, for she had herself receive

naturally together than Beau Nash might have done if they had lived in his golden days, and he had alighted from his coach and six for the purpose.

The morning remained squally, and the streets were miserably muddy, but no rain fell as they walked toward the Iron Bridge. The little creature seemed so young in his eyes, that there were moments when he found himself thinking of her, if not speaking to her, as if she were a child. Perhaps he seemed as old in her eyes as she seemed young in his.

"I am sorry to hear you were so inconvenienced last night, sir, as to be locked in. It was very unfortunate."

It was nothing, he returned. He had had a very good

bed.

"Oh yes!" she said quickly; "she believed there were excellent beds at the coffee-house." He noticed that the coffee-house was quite a majestic hotel to her, and that she treasured its reputation.

"I believe it is very expensive," said Little Dorrit, "but my father has told me that quite beautiful dinners may be got there. And wine," she added timing.

Were you ever there?" Only into the kitenen, to fetch hot

water."
To think of growing up with a kind of awe upon one as to the luxuries of that superb establishment, the Marshalsea hotel!
"I asked you last night," said Clennam, "how you

had become acquainted with my mother. Did you ever hear her name before she sent for you?"

"No, sir."
Do you think your father ever did?"

met her eyes raised to his with so much wonder in them (she was scared when that encounter took place, and shrunk away again), that he felt it necessary

say:
"I have a reason for asking, which I cannot very well explain; but you must, on no account, suppose it to be of a nature to cause you the least alarm or anxiety. Quite the reverse. And you think that at no time of your father's life was my name of Clennam ever familiar to him?"

He felt, from the tone in which she spoke, that she

He felt, from the tone in which she spoke, that she spanning up at him with those parted lips; therefore he looked before him, rather than make her heart beat quicker still by embarrassing her afresh.

Thus they emerged upon the Iron Bridge, which was as quiet after the roaring streets, as though it had been open country. The wind blew roughly, the wet squalls came ratting past them, skimming the poels on the road and pavement, and raining them sown into the river. The clouds raced on fariously in

aown into the river. The clouds raced on fariously in the lead-colered sky, the smoke and mist raced after them, the dark tide ran fierce and strong in the same direction. Little Dorrit seemed the least, the quietest and weakest of Heaven's creatures.

"Let me put you in a coach," said Arthur Clennam, very nearly adding, "my poor child."

She hurriedly declined, saying that wet or dry made little difference to her; she was used to go about in all weathers. He knew it to be so, and was touched with more pity; thinking of the slight figure at his side, making its nightly way through the damp, dark, boisterous streets, to such a place of rest.

terous streets, to such a place of rest.

"You spoke so feelingly to me last night, sir, and I found afterward that you had been so generous to my father, that I could not resist your message, if it was only to thank you; especially as I wished very much to say to you—"she hesitated and trembled, and tears to you—"she hesitated an

'To say to me—?'
'That I hope you will not misunderstand my father. Don't judge him, sir, as you would judge others outside the gates. He has been there so long! I never saw him outside, but I can understand that he must have own different in some things since."
"My thoughts will never be unjust or harsh toward

kim, believe me."
"Not," she said, with a prouder air, as the misgiv-"Not," she said, with a prouder air, as the misgiving evidently crept upon her that she might seem to be abandoning him. "Not that he has anything to be ashamed of for him. He only requires to be understood. I only ask for him that his life may be fairly remembered. All that he said was quite true. It all happened just as he related it. He is very much respected. Everybody who comes in is glad to know him. He is more courted than any one cise. He is far more thought of than the Marshal is."

If ever pride were innocent, it was innocent in Lit.

If ever pride were innecent, it was innecent in Lit-tle Dorrit when she grew boastful of her father.

"It is often said that his manners are a true gentle-"It is often said that his manners are a true general that his man's, and quite a study. I see none like them in that place, but he is admitted to be superior to all the rest. This is quite as much why they make him presents, as because they know him to be needy. He is not to be because they know him to be needy. Who could be

Into a quarter of a century and be prosperous?

What affection in her words, what compassion in her repressed tears, what a great soul of fidelity within her, how true the light that shed false brightness round

If I have found it best to conceal where my home is, it is not because I am ashamed of him. God for-bid! Nor am I so much ashamed of the place itself as might be supposed. People are not bad because they come there. I have known numbers of good, persevering, honest people come there through misfor-tune. They are almost all kind-hearted to one another. And it would be ungrateful indeed in me, to forget that I have had many quiet, comfortable hours there: that I had an excellent friend there when I was quite a baby, who was very fond of me; that I have been taught there, and have worked there, and have slept soundly there. I think it would be aimest cowardly and cruel not to have some little attachment for it, after all this."

some little attachment for it, after all this."

She had relieved the faithful fullness of her heart, and modestly said, raising her eyes appealingly to her new friend's, "I did not mean to say so much, nor have I ever but once spoken about this before. But it seems to set it more right than it was last night. I said I wished you had not followed me, sir. I don't wish it so much now, unless you should think—indeed I don't wish it at all, unless I should have spoken as confusedly, that—that you can scarcely understand

indeed I don't wish it at all, unless I should have spoared so confusedly, that—that you can scarcely understand soe, which I am afraid may be the case. He told her with perfect truth that it was not the case; and putting himself between her and the sharp wind and rain, sheltered her as well as he could. "I feel permitted now," he said, "to ask you a little more concerning your father. Has he many

"I mean detaining creditors, who keep him where

"Oh yes! a great number."
"Can you tell me—I can get the information, no deabt, elsewhere, if you cannot—who is the most information to them?"
Dorit said, after considering a little, that she used to hear long ago of Mr. Tite Barnacie as a man of great power. He was a commissioner, or a board, or a trustee, "or something." He lived in Growvenor Square, she thought, or very near it. He was under Government—high in the Circumlocution Office. She appeared to have acquired, in her infancy, some awful impression of the might of this formidable Mr. Tite Barnacle of Growvenor Square, or very near it, and the Circumlocution Office, which quite crushed her when she mentioned him. she mentioned him. "It can do no harm," thought Arthur, " if I see this

"It can do no nath, thought at the Mr. Tite Barnacle."

The thought did not present itself so quietly but that her quickness intercepted it. "Ah!" said Little Dorrut, shaking her head with the mild despair of a lifetime. "Many people used to think once of getting my poor father out, but you don't know how hopeless it."

She forgot to be shy at the moment, in honestly warning him seway from the sanken wreck he had a dream of raising; and looked at him with eyes which assuredly, in association with her patient face, her fragile figure, her spare dress, and the wind and rain, did not turn him from his purpose of helping her.

"Even if it could be done," said she—"and it never can be done now—where could father live, or how could he live! I have often thought that if such a change could come, it might be anything but a sera change could come, it might be anything but a service to him now. People might not think so well of him outside as they do there. He might not be so gently dealt with outside, as he is there. He might not be so fit himself for the life outside, as he is for that."

Here for the first time she could not restrain her tears from falling; and the little thin hands he had watched when they were so busy, trembled as they

watched when they were so busy, trembled as they clasped each other.

"It would be a new distress to him even to know that I carn a little money, and that Fanny carns a little money. He is so anxious about us, you see, feeling helplessly shut up there. Such a good, good father!"

He let the little burst of feeling go by before he spoke. It was soon gone. She was not accustomed to think of herself, or to trouble any one with her emotions. He had but glanced away at the piles of city roofs and chimneys among which the smoke was rolling heavily, and at the wilderness of masts on the river, and the wilderness of steeples on the shore, inriver, and the wilderness of steeples on the shore, in-distinctly mixed together in the stormy haze, when she was again as quiet as if she had been plying her

needle in his mother's room.
"You would be glad to have your brother set at

"You would be glad to have your brother set at liberty?"

"Oh very, very glad, sir!"

"Well, we will hope for him at least. You told me last night of a friend you had!?"

His name was Ploruish, Little Dorrit said.
And where did Plornish live! Plornish lived in Bleeding Heart Yard. He was "only a plasterer," Little Dorrit said, as a caution to him not to form high social expectations of Plornish. He lived at the last house in Bleeding Heart Yard, and his name was over a little gateway.

Arthur took down the address and gave her his. He had now done all he had sought to do for the present,

After took down the above and get in the had now done all he had sought to do for the present, except that he wished to leave her with a reliance upon him, and to have something like a promise from her that she would cherish it.

"There is one friend!" he said, putting up his pocket book. "As I take you back—you are going back."

"Oh yes! coing straight home."

back!"
"Oh yes! going straight home."
"As I take you back," the word home jarred upon him, "let me ask you to persuade yourself that you have another friend. I make no professions and say "You are truly kind to me, sir. I am sure I need no

more."
They walked back through the miserable muldy They walked back through the miserable muddy streets, and among the poor, mean shops, and were joestled by the exceeds of dirty hucksters usual to a poor neighborhood. There was nothing, by the short way, that was pleasant to any of the five senses. Yet it was not a common passage through common rain, and mire, and noise, to Clennam, having this little, slender, careful creature on his arm. How young she seemed to him, or how old he to her; or what a secret either to the other, in that beginning of the destined interweaving of their stories, matters not here. He thought of her having been born and bred among these scenes, and shrinking through them now, familiar yet misplaced; he thought of her long nequaintance with the squalid needs of life, and of her innocence; of her old solicitude for others, and her few years and her child-lish aspect.

They were come into the High Street, where the prison stood, when a voice cried, "Little mother, little mother!" Dorrit stopping and looking back, an excited figure of a strange kind bounced against them (still crying "little mother,"), fell down, and scattered the contents of a large basket, filled with

potatoes, in the mud.
"Oh, Maggy," said Dorrit, "what a clumsy child

"Oh, Maggy," said Dorrit, "what a clumsy canuyou are!"
Maggy was not burt, but picked herself up immediately, and then began to pick up the potatoes, in which
both Dorrit and Arthur Clennam helped. Maggy
picked up very few potatoes, and a great quantity of
mud; but they were all recovered, and deposited in the
basket. Maggy then smeared her muddy face with
her shawl, and presenting it to Mr. Clennam as a type
of purity, enabled him to see what she was like.
She was about eight-and-twenty, with large bones,
large features, large feet and hands, large eyes, and
no hair. Her large eyes were limpid and almost colorless; they seemed to be very little affected by light,
and to stand unnaturally still. There was also that

less; they seemed to be very little affected by light, and to stand unnaturally still. There was also that attentive listening expression in her face, which is seen in the faces of the blind; but she was not blind, having one tolerably serviceable eye. Her face not blind, having one tolerably serviceable eye. Her lace was not exceedingly ugly, though it was only redeemed from being so by a smile; a good-humored smile, and pleasant initself, but rendered pitiable by being constantly there. A great white cap, with a quantity of opaque frilling that was always flapping about, apologised for Maggy's baldness; and made it so very difficult for her old black bornet to retain its place upon ber head, that it held on round her neck like a gipsey's baby. A commission of haberdashers could alone have reported what the rest of her poor dress was made of; but it had a strong general resemblance to seawed, with here and there a gigantic toa-leaf. Her ea-wood, with here and there a gigantic tea-leaf. Her bawl looked particularly like a tea-leaf, after long in-

fusion.

Arthur Clennam looked at Dorrit, with the expression of one saving, "May I ask who this is?" Dorrit, whose hand this Maggy, still calling her little mother, had begun to fondle, answered in words. (They were under a gateway into which the majority of the pota-

s had rolled.)
This is Maggy, sir."
Maggy, sir," echoed the person presented. "Lit-

the mother!"
"She is the granddaughter "-said Dorrit.
"Granddaughter," echoed Maggy.
"Of my old nurse, who has been dead a long time.

Maggy, how old are you!"
"Ten, mother," said Maggy.
"You can't think how good she is, sir," said Dorrit,

with infinite tenderness.

"Good she is," echoed Maggy, transferring the procoun in a most expressive way from herself, to her

"Or how clever," said Dorrit. "She goes on errands as well as any one." Maggy laughed. "And is as trustworthy as the Bank of England." Maggy laughed. "She carns her own living entirely. Entirely, sir!" said Dorrit in a lower and triumphant tone.

Really does!"
"Wit is her history!" ask edClennam.
"Think of that, Maggy!" said Dorrit, taking her
"Think of that, Maggy!" said Dorrit, taking her two large hands and clapping them together." A
gentleman from thousands of miles away, wanting to
know your history!"
"My history!" cried Maggy. "Little mother."

rentlemen from thousands or mines away, wanting to inow your history!"

"My history!" cried Maggy. "Little mother.'

"She means me," said Dorrit, rather confused; 'she is very much attached to me. Her old grand-mother was not so kind to her as she should have been; ras she, Maggy!"

Maggy shook her head, made a drinking vessel of the clerked left hand, drank out of it and said.

Magy shook her head, made a drinking vessel of her clenched left hand, drank out of it, and said, "Gin." Then beat an imaginary child, and said, "Broom-handles and pokers."
"When Maggy was ten years old," said Dorrit, watching her face while she spoke, "she had a bad fever, air, and she has never grown any older ever

"Ten years old," said Maggy, nodding her head. "But what a nice hospital! So comfortable, wasn't it! Oh so nice it was. Such a Ev nly place!" "She had never been at peace before, sir," said

Donit, turning toward Arthur for an instant and speak-ing low, "and she always runs off upon that."
"Such beds there is there!" cried Maggy. "Such lemonades! Such oranges! Such d'heious broth and wine! Such Chicking! Oh, ais'r it a delightful place to go and stop at!"

"So Maggy stopped there as long as she could,"

"So Maggy stopped there as long as she could," said Dorrit, in her former tone of telling a child's story; the tone designed for Maggy's ear, "and at last, when she could stop there no longer, she came out. Then, because she was never to be more than ten years old, however long she lived." "However long she lived." "However long she lived." and because she was very weak; indeed was so weak that when she began to laugh she couldn't stop herself—which was a great pity—" (Maggy mighty grave of a sudden.)
"Her grandmother did not know what to do with her, and for some years was very unkindeo her indeed. At length, in course of time, Maggy began to take pains to improve herself, and to be very attentive and very industrious; and by degrees was allowed to come in and out as often as she liked, and got enough to do to support herself, and does support herself. And

that," said Little Dorrit, elapping the two great hands together agam, "ie Maggy's history, as Maggy

together again, "is Maggy's history, as Maggy knows!"
Ab! But Arthur would have known what was want-Ah! But Arthur would have known what was wanting to its completeness, though he had never heard the words Little mother; though he had never seen the fondling of the small spare hand; though he had had no sight for the tears now standing in the coloriese eves; though he had had no bearing for the sob that checked the clumsy laugh. The dirty gateway with the wind and rain whistling through it, and the basket of muddy potatoes waiting to be split again or taken up, never seemed the common hole it really was, when he looked back to it by these lights. Never, never!

never! ver! They were very near the end of their walk, and they They were very near the end of their walk, and they now came out of the gateway to finish it. Nothing would serve Maggy but they must stop at a grocer's window, short of their destination, for her to show her learning. She could read after a sort: and picked out the fat figures in the tickets of prices, for the most part correctly. She also stumbled, with a large balance of success against her failures, through various philanthropic recommendations to Try our Mixture, Try our Family Black, Try our Orange-flavoured Pekee, challenging competition at the head of Flowery Teas; and various cautions to the public against spurious establishments competition at the head of Flowery Teas; and various cautions to the public against spurious establishments and adulterated articles. When he saw hew pleasure brought a rosy tint into Dorric's face when Maggy made a hit, he felt that he could have stood there making a library of the grocer's window until the rain and wind were tired.

The court-yard received them at last, and there he said good-bye to Little Dorrit. Little as she had always looked, she looked less than ever when he saw the going into the Marshalasea lodge nassage, the little

ways looked, she looked less than ever when he saw her going into the Marshalson lodge passage, the little mother attended by her big child.

The cage door opened, and when the small bird, reared in captivity, had tamely fluttered in, he saw it shut agam; and then he came away.

CHAPTER X.

CHAPTER X.

CONTAINING THE WHOLE SCIENCE OF GOVERNMENT.

The Circumlocution Office was (as everybody knows without being told) the most important Department under Government. No public business of any kind could possibly be done at any time, without the acquisecence of the Circumlocution Office. Its finger was in the largest public pie, and in the smallest public tart. It was equally impossible to do the plainest right and to undo the plainest wrong, without the express authority of the Circumlocution Office. If another Gunpowder Plot had been discovered half an hour before the lighting of the match, nobody would have been justified in saving the Parliament until there had been half a score of boards, half a bushel of minutes, several sacks of official memoranda, and a family-vaultfull of ungraumatical correspondence, on the part of the Circumlocution Office.

This glorious establishment had been early in the field, when the one sublime principle involving the difficult art of governing a country was first distinctly revealed to statesmen. It had been foremost to study that bright revelation, and to carry its shining influence through the whole of the official proceedings. Whatever was required to be done, the Circumlocution Office was beforehand with all the public departments in the art of perceiving—How NOT TO DO IT.

Through this delicate perception, through the tact with which it invariably seized it, and through the genius with which it always acted on it, the Circumlocution Office had risen to overtop all the public departments; and the public condition had risen to be—what it was.

It is true that How not do it was the great study and CONTAINING THE WHOLE SCIENCE OF GOVERNMENT.

what it was. It is true that How not do it was the great study and It is true that How not do it was the great study and object of all public departments and professional poli-ticians all round the Circumfocution Office. It is true that every new premier and every new government, coming in because they had upheld a certain thing as coming in because they had upheld a certain thing a necessary to be done, were no sconer come in that they applied their utmost faculties to discovering, How not to do it. It is true that from the moment when s general election was over, every returned man who had been raving on hustings because it hadn't been done, and who had been asking the friends of the honorable gentleman in the opposite interest on pain of impenchment to tell him why it hadn't been done, and who had been asserting that it must be done, and who who had been asserting that it must be done, and who had been pledging himself that it should be done, began to devise, How it was not to be done. It is true that the debates of both Houses of Parliament the whole session through, uniformly tended to the protracted deliberation, How not to do it. It is true that the royal speech at the opening of such session virtually said, My lord- and gentlemen, you have a considerable stroke of work to do, and you will please to retire to your respective chambers, and discuss, How not to do it. It is true that the royal speech, at the close of such session, virtually said, My lords and gentlemen, you have through several laborious months been considering with great loyalty and patriotism, How not to do it, and you have found out; and with the blessing of Providence upon the harvest (natural, not political). I now dismiss you. All this is true, but the Circumlocution Office went beyond it.

Because the Circumlocution Office went on mechanical had been asserting that it must be done, and who

the Circumlocution Office went beyond it.

Because the Circumlocution Office went on mechanically, every day, keeping this wonderful, all-sufficient wheel of stateranuship. How not to do it, in motion. Because the Circumlocution Office was down upon any ill-advised public servant who was going to do it, or who appeared to be by any surprising accident in remote dauger of doing it, with a minute, and a memorandum, and a letter of instructions, that extinguished him. It was this spirit of national efficiency in the Circumlocution Office that had gradually led to its having something to do with everything. Mechanicians, natural philosophers, soldiers, sailors, petitioners, memorialists, people with grievances, people who wanted to redress grievances, jobbing people, jobbed people, people who couldn't get rewarded for merit, and people who couldn't get rewarded for demerit, were all indiscriminately tucked up under the foolscap paper of the Circumlocution Office.

paper of the Circumlocution Office.

Numbers of people were lost in the Circumlocution Office. Unfortunates with wrongs, or with projects Office. Unfortunates with wrongs, or with projects for the general welfare, (and they had better have had wrongs at first, than have taken that bitter English recipe for certainly getting them), who in slow large of time and agony had passed safely through other public departments; who, according to rule, had been bullied in this, overreached by that, and evaded by the other, got referred at last to the Circumfocution Office, and never reappeared in the light of day. Boards sat upon them, Secretaries minuted upon them, Commissioners gabbled about them, clerks registered, entered, checked, and ticked them off, and they melted away. In short, all the business of the country went through the Circumfocution Office, except the business that never came out of it; and its name was Legion. Legion. Sometimes, angry spirits attacked the Circumlocu

Sometimes, angry spirits attacked the Circumiocution Office. Sometimes, parliamentary questions were asked about it, and even parliamentary motions made or threatened about it, by demagogues so low and ignorant as to hold that the real recipe of Government was, How to do it. Then would the noble lord, or right honorable gentleman, in whose department it was to defeed the Circumiocution Office, put an orange in his pocket, and make a regular field-day of the occasion. Then would he come down to that House with a slap upon the table, and meet the honorable gentleman foot to foot. Then would he be there to tell that honorable gentleman that the Circumiocution Office not inpon the table, and meet the honorable gentleman foot to foot. Then would he be there to tell that honorable gentleman that the Circumiocution Office not only was biameless in this matter, but was commendable in this matter, was extollable to the skies in this matter. Then would he be there to tell that honorable gentleman, that although the Circumiocution Office was invariably right, and wholly right, it never was so right as in this matter. Then would he be there to tell that honorable gentleman that it would have been more to his honor, more to his credit, more to his good taste, more to his good sense, more to half the dictionary of commonplaces, if he had left the Circumlocution Office alone, and never approached this matter. Then would he keep one eye upon a coach or crammer from the Circumlocution Office sitting below the bar, and smash the honorable gentleman with the Circumlocution Office account of this matter. And although one of two things always happened; namely, either that the Circumlocution Office had nothing to say and said it, or that it had something to say of which the noble lord, or right honorable gentleman, blundered one balf and forgot the other; the Circumlocution Office was always voted immaculate by an accommodating majority.

Such a unrecy of statesmen had the department ating majority.

Such a nursery of statesmen had the departmen

Such a nursery of statesmen had the department become in virtue of a long career of this nature, that several solemn lords had attained the reputation of heing quite unearthly prodigies of business, solely from having practiced, How not to do it, at the head of the Circumlocution Office. As to the minor priests and acolytes of that temple, the result of all this was that they stood divided into two classes, and down to the junior messenger, either believed in the Circumlocution Office as a Heaven-born institution, that had an absolute right to do whatever it liked, or took refuge in total infidelity, and considered it a flagrant nuisance. The Barnacle family had for some time helped to administer the Circumlocution Office. The Tite Barnacle Branck, indeed, considered themselves in a general way as having vested rights in that direction, and took it ill if any other family had much to say to it. The Barnacles were a very high family, and a very large family. They were dispersed all over the public offices, and held all sorts of public places. Either the nation was under a load of obligation to the Barnacles, or the Barnacles naving their opinion, the nation theirs.

The Mr. Tite Barnacle who, at the period now in question, usually coached or eranimed the stateman at the head of the Circumlocution Office, when that noble or right honorable individual sat a little uneasily in his saddle by reason of some vagabond making a tilt at him in a newspaper, was more flush of blood

in his saddle by reason of some vagabond making that him in a newspaper, was more flush of bloc than money. As a Barnacle he had his place, whice than money. As a Barnacle he had his place, which was a song thing enough; and as a Barnacle he had, of course, put is his son, Barnacle Junier, in the effice.

But he had intermarried with a branch of the Stilts But he had intermarried with a branch of the Stiltatalkings, who were also better endowed in a sanguineous point of view than with real or personal property,
and of this marriage there had been issue, Barnacle
Junior, and three young ladies. What with the patrician requirements of Barnacle Junior, the three young
indies. Mrs. Tite Barnacle found the intervals between
self, Mr. Tite Barnacle found the intervals between
quarter day and quarter day rather longer than he
could have desired—a circumstance which he always
attributed to the country's parsimony.

For Mr. Tite Barnacle Mr. Arthur Clennam made
his fifth inquire one day at the Circumlocution Office,

For Mr. Tite Barnacle Mr. Arthur Clennam made his fifth inquiry one day at the Circumlocution Office, having on previous occasions awaited that gentleman successively in a hall, a glass-case, a waiting-room, and a fre-proof passage, where the department seemed to keep its wind. On this occasion Mr. Barnacle was not engaged, as he had been before, with the noble prodicy at the head of the department, but was absent. Barnacle Junior, however, was announced as a lesser star yet visible above the office horizon.

herizon.

With Barnacle Junior he signified his desire to con-With Barnacle Junior he signified his desire to confer, and found that young gentleman singeing the calves of his legs at the parental fire, and supporting his spine against the mantle-shelf. It was a comfortable room, handsomely furnished in the higher official manner, and presenting stately suggestions of the absent Barnacle in the thick carpet, the leather-covered desk to sit at, the leather-covered desk to stand at, the formidable easy-chair and hearth-rug, the interposed screen, the torn-up papers, the dispatch-boxes, with little labels sticking out of them like medicine bottles or dead game, the pervading smell of leather and mahogany, and a general bamboozling air of How not to do it.

leather and mahogany, and a general bamboozling air of How not to do it.

The present Barnacle, holding Mr. Clennam's card in his hand, had a youthful aspect, and the fluffliest little whisker, perhaps, that ever was seen. Such a downy tip was on his callow chin, that he seemed half fledged like a young bird, and a compassionate observer might have urged that if he had not singed the calves of his legs he would have died of cold. He had a superior eye-glass dangling round his neck, but, unfortunately, had such flat orbits to his eyes, and such limp little eyelids, that it wouldn't stick in when he put it up, but kept tumbling out against his waist-coat buttons with a click that discomposed him very much.

much.
"Oh, I say. Look here! My father's not in the way, and won't be in the way to-day," said Barnacle Junior. "Is this anything that I can do!"
(Click! Eye-glass down. Barnacle Junior quite frightened, and feeling all round himself, but not able to be able to be a set of the said of the said

to find it.)
"You are very good," said Arthur Clennam. "I
wish, however, to see Mr. Barnacle."
"But, I say. Lock here! You haven't got any
appointment, you know," said Barnacle Junier.
(By this time he had found the eye-glass, and put it up again.)
"No," said Arthur Cleunam. "That is what I wish

"No," said Arthur Clemann,
to have."
But, I say. Look here! Is this public business?"
asked Barnacle Junior.
(Chek! Eye-glass down again. Barnacle Junior in
that state of search after it that Mr. Clemann felt it
useless to reply at present.)
"Is it," said Barnacle Junior, taking heed of his visitors brown face, "anything about — Tunnage—or that

"Is it, said barnaces dunot—Tunnage—or that sort of thing!"

(Pausing for a reply, he opened his right eye with his hand, and stuck his glass in it in that inflammatory manner that his eye began watering dreadfully.)

"No," said Arthur, "it is nothing about tunnage."

"Then look here. Is it private business!"

"I really am not sure. It relates to a Mr. Dorrit."

"Look here, I tell you what! You had better call at our house, if you are going that way. Twenty-four Mews Street, Gresvenor Square. My father's got a slight touch of the gout, and is kept at home by it."

(The misguided young Barnacle evidently going blind on his eye-glass side, but ashamed to make any further alteration in his painful arrangements.)

"Thank you. I will call there now. Good morning." Young Barnacle seemed discomined at this, as not having at all expected him to go.

"You are quite sure," said Barnacle Junior, calling after him when he got to the door, unwilling wholly to relinquish the bright business idea he had conceived, "that it's nothing about Tunnage."

"Quite sure."

might have taken place if it had been anything about tunnage, Mr. Clennam withdrew to pursue his in pairies.

Mews Street, Grosvenor Square, was not absolutely Mews Street, Grosvenor Square, was not absolutely Grosvenor Square itself, but it was very near it. It was a bideous little street of dead walls, stables and dunghills, with lofts over conch-houses inhabited by coachmen's families, who had a passion for drying clothes, and decorating their window sills with miniature turn-pike-gates. The principal chimney-sweep of that fashionable quarter lived at the blind end of Mew street; and the same corner contained an establishment much frequented about early morning and twilight, for the purchase of wine-bottles and kitchenstoff. Punch's shows used to lean against the dead wall in Mew Street, while their proprietors were dining elsewhere; and the dogs of the neighborhood made appointments to meet in the same locality. Yet there were two or three small airless houses at the entrance end of Mew Street, which went at enormous rents on account of their being abject hangers-on to a fashion able situation; and whenever one of these fearful little coops was to be let (which seldom happened, for they were in great request,) the house-agent advertised it as a centlemaly residence in the most aristo-

the coops was to be let (which sealoum nappeads, it they were in great request,) the house-agent adver-tised it as a gentlemanly residence in the most aristo-cratic part of the town, inhabited solely by the clite of the bean-monde.

If a gentlemanly residence coming strictly within It a genticimanty residence coming strictly withis narrow margin, had not been essential to the blood of the Barnacles, this particular branch would have had a pretty wide selection among, let us say, ten thousand houses, offering fifty times the accommodation for a third of the money. As it was, Mr. Barnacle, finding his gentlemanly residence extremely inconvenient and his gentlemanly residence extremely inconvenient and extremely dear, always inid it, as a public servant, at the door of the country, and adduced it as another in-stance of the Country's parsimony.

Arthur Cleman came to a squeezed house, with a ramshackle bowed front, little dingy windows, and a

little dark area like a damp waistcoat-pocket, which he found to be number twenty four, Mews Street, Grosvenor Square. To the sense of smell, the house was like a sort of bottle filled with a strong distillation of mews; and when the footman opened the door, he seemed to take the stopper out. The footman was to the Groevenor Square footmen

The footman was to the Grosvenor Square footmen what the house was to the Grosvenor Square houses Admirable in his way, his way was a back and a by

Admirable in his way, his way was a back and a byway. His gorgeousness was not unnixed with dirt; and both in complexion and consistency, he had suffered from the closeness of his pantry. A sallow flabbliness was upon him, when he took the stopper out, and presented the bottle to Mr. Clennam's nose.

"Be so good as to give that card to Mr. Tite Barnacle, and to say that I have just now seen the younger Mr. Barnacle, who recommended me to call here."

The footman (who had as many large buttons with the Barnacle creet upon them, on the flaps of his pockets, as if he were the family strong box, and carried the plate and jewels about with him buttoned up) pondered over the card a little then said, "Walk in." It required some judgment to do it without butting the inner hall-door open, and in the consequent mental inner hall-door open, and in the consequent mental confusion and physical darkness slipping down the kitchen stairs. The visitor, however, brought himself

kitchen stairs. The visitor, however, brought himself up safely on the door-mat.

Still the footman said "Walk in," so the visitor followed him. At the inner hall-door, another bottle seemed to be presented and another stopper taken out. This second phial appeared to be filled with concentrated provisions and extract of Sink from the pantry. After a skirmish in the narrow passage, occasioned by the footman's opening the door of the dismal diningroum with confidence, finding some one there with consternation, and backing on the visitor with disorder, the visitor was shu up, pending his announcement, in sternation, and backing on the visitor with disorder, the visitor was shut up, pending his announcement, in a close back parlor. There he had an opportunity of refreshing himself with both the bottles at once, look-ing out at a low blinding back wall three feet off, and speculating on the number of Barnacle families within the bills of mortality who lived in such hutches of their own free flunkey choice.

own free flunkey choice.

Mr. Barnaele would see him. Would he walk up stairs? He would, and he did; and in the drawing room, with his leg on a rest, he found Mr. Barnaele himself, the express image and presentment of How mot to do it.

Mr. Barnacle dated from a better time, when the

country was not so partimonious, and the Circumlocu-tion Office was not so badgered. He wound and wound folds of white crarat round his neck, as he wound and wound folds of tape and paper round the neck of the country. His wristbands and collar were neck of the country. His wristoands and count were oppressive, his voice and manner were oppressive He had a large watch-chain and bunch of scale, a coal buttoned up to incorvenience, a waistocat buttoned up to incorvenience, an inwrinkled pair of trowsers, a stiff pair of boots. He was altogether splendid, mas ve, overpowering, and impracticable. He seemed have been sitting for his portrait to Sir Thomas awrence all the days of his life. "Mr. Cleunam?" said Mr. Barnacle. "Be scated."

Mr. Clennam became seated.
"You have called on me, I believe," said Mr. Bar nacle, "at the Circumlocution—" giving it the air of a word of about five and twenty syllables, " Office."

a word of about five and twenty syllables, "Office."

"I have taken that liberty."

Mr. Barnacle selemnly bent his head as who should say "I do not deny that it is a liberty; proceed to take another liberty, and let me know your business."

"Allow me to observe that I have been for some years in China, am quite a stranger at home, and have no personal motive or interest in the inquiry I am about to make."

Mr. Barnacle, tapped, his fineers on the table, and

Mr. Barnacle tapped his fingers on the table, and, s if he were now sitting for his portrait to a new and strange artist, appeared to say to his visitor, "If yea

will be good enough to take me with my present lofty expression, I shall feel obliged."

"I have found a debtor in the Marshaleca prison of the name of Dorrit, who has been there many years. I wish to investigate his confused affairs, so far as to ascertain whether it may not be possible, after this lapse of time, to ameliorate his unhappy condition. The name of Mr. Tite Barnacle has been mentioned to make the confuse of the control of t

On behalf of the Crown, may I ask, or as a private

ndividual!"
"The Circumlocation Department, Sir," Mr. Barna-"The Circumlocation Department, Sir," Mr. Barna-cle replied, "may have possibly recommended—possi-bly—I can not say—that some public claim against the insolvent estate of a firm or copartnership to which this person may have belonged, should be enforced. The question may have been, in the course of official business, referred to the Circumlocation Department for its consideration. The department may have either originated, or confirmed, a minute making that recom-mendation."

mendation.

"I assume this to be the case, then."

"The Circumlecution Department," said Mr. Barnacle, "is not responsible for any gentleman's assump-

"May I inquire how I can obtain official information as to the real state of the case!"
"It is competent," said Mr. Barnacle, "to any member of the—Public," mentioning that obscure body with reluctance, as his natural enemy, "to memorialize the Circumlocution Department. Such formalities as are required to be observed in so doing, may be known on application to the proper branch of of that department."
"Which is the proper branch!"

"Which is the proper branch?"

"I must refer you," returned Mr. Barnacle, ringing he bell, "to the department itself for a formal answer to that inquiry."
"Excuse my mentioning-"

to that inquiry."

"Excuse my mentioning—"

"The department is accessible to the—Public"—
Mr. Barnacle was always checked a little by that word
of impertinent signification—" if the—Public approaches it according to the official forms; if the—
Public does not appreach it according to the official
forms, the—Public has itself to blame."

Mr. Barnacle made him a severe bow, as a wounded
man of family, a wounded man of place, and a
wounded man of a gentlemanly residence, all rolled
into one; and he made Mr. Barnacle a bow, and was
shut out into Mews Street by the flabby footman.

A Having got to this pass, he resolved, as an excreise in
perseverance, to betake himself again to the Circumlecution Office, and try what satisfaction he got there.
So he went back to the Circumlecution Office, and
once more sent up his card to Barnacle Junior by a
messenger who took it very ill indeed that he should
come back again, and who was eating mashed potatoes and gravy behind a partition by the hall fire.

He was readmitted to the presence of Barnacle
Junior, and found that young gentleman singeing
his knees now, and gaping his weary way on to a
colock.

"I say. Look here! You stick to us in a devil of

"I say. Look here! You stick to us in a devil of manner," said Barnacle Junior, looking over his

shoulder. I want to know-"

"Look here! Upon my soul you musn't come into the place saying you want to know, you know," re-monstrated Barnacle Junior, turning about and putin the eye-glass.

"I want to know," said Arthur Clennam, who had made up his mind to persistence in one short form of words, "the precise nature of the claim of the Crown against a prisoner for debt samed Dorrit."

"I say. Lock here! You really are going it at a great pace, you know. Egod you haven t got an ap-pointment," said Barnacle Junior, as if the thing were "I want to know," said Arthur. And repeated his

"I want to know, said Albaham until his eye-glass Barnacle Junior stared at him until his eye-glass fell out, and then put it in again and stared at him until it fell out again. "You have no right to come this sort of move," he then observed with the greatest weakness. "Look here! What do you mean? You told me you didn't know whether it was public business or not."

"I have now ascertained that it is public business," yeturned the suitor, "and I want to know"—and

"I have now ascertained that it is public business," returned the suitor, "and I want to know"—and again repeated his monotonous inquiry.

Its effect upon young Barnacle was to make him repeat in a defenseless way," Look here! Upon my sout you mustn't come into the place raying you want to know, you know!" The effect of that upon Arthur Clennam was to make him repeat his inquiry in exactly the same words and tone as before. The effect of that upon young Barnacle was to make him a wonder full spectacle of failure and helplessness.

"Well, I tell you what. Look here! You had better try the Secretarial Department," he said at last, siding to the bell and ringing it. "Jenkinson," to the mashed potatoes messenger, "Mr. Wobbler!"

Arthur Clennam, who now felt that he had devoted himself to the storming of the Circumlocution Office, and must go through with it, accompanied the messenger to another floor of the building, where that functionary pointed out Mr. Wobbler's room. He entered that apartment, and found two gentlemen sitting face to face at a large and easy desk, one of whom was polishing a gun-barrel on his pocket-handkerchief, while the other was spreading marmalade on bread with a paper-knife.

"Mr. Wobbler!" inquired the suitor.

paper-knife.
"Mr. Wobbler?" inquired the suitor.

Both gentlemen glauced at him, and seemed sur-prised at this assurance.
"So he went," said the gentleman with the gua-"So he went," said the gentleman with the gan-barrel, who was an extremely deliberate speaker, "down to his consin's place, and took the Dog with him by rail. Inestimable Dog. Flew at the porter fellow when he was put into the dog-box, and flew at the guard when he was taken out. He got half-a-dozen fellows into a Barn, and a good supply of Rats, and timed the Dog. Finding the Dog able to do it immensely, made the match, and heavily backed the Dog. When the match came off, some devil of a fel-low was bought over, Sir, Dog was made drunk, Dog's

"Mr. Wobbler?" inquired the suitor.
The gentleman who was spreading the marmalade returned, without looking up from that occupation, "What did he call the Dog?"

"What did he call the Dog!"
"Called him Lovely," said the other gentleman.
"Said the Dog was the perfect picture of the old aunt
from whom he had expectations. Found him particularly like her when hocussed."
"Mr. Wobbler!" said the suitor.

Both gentlemen laughed for some time. The gentleman with the gun-barrel, considering it on impection in a satisfactory state, referred it to the other; receiving confirmation of his views, he fitted it into its place in the case before him, and took out the stock and reliabled that accelerations.

and polished that, softly whistling.
"Mr. Wobbler?" said the suitor.
"What's the matter?" then said Mr. Wobbler, with his mouth full.
"I want to know —" and Arthur Clennam sgain

mechanically set forth what he wanted to know.

"Can't inform you," observed Mr. Wobbler, apparently to his lunch. "Never heard of it. Nothing at all to do with it. Better try Mr. Clive, second door on

all to do with it. Better try Mr. Chive, second door on the left in the next passage."

"Perhaps he will give me the same answer."

"Very likely. Don't know any thing about it," said Mr. Wobbler.

The suitor turned away and had left the room, when the gentleman with the gun called out, "Mister! Hallo!"

He looked in again.
"Shut the door after you. You're letting in a devil

"Shut the door after you. You're letting in a deva of a draught here!"

A few steps brought him to the second door on the left in the next passage. In that room he found three gentlemen; number one doing nothing particular, number two doing nothing particular, number three doing nothing particular. They seemed, however, to be more directly concerned than the others had been the directly concerned that the others had been be more directly concerned than the others had been in the effective execution of the great principle of the office, as there was an awful inner apartment with a double door, in which the Circumlocution Sages 49 peared to be assembled in council, and out of which there was an imposing coming of papers, and into which there was an imposing going of papers, almost constantly; wherein another gentleman, number four, was the active instrument.

was the active instrument.
"I want to know," said Arthur Clennam—and again

"I want to know," said Arthur Clennam—and again tated his case in the same barrel-organ way. As number one referred him to number two, and as number two referred him to number three, he had occasion to state it three times before they all referred him to number four, to whom he stated it again.

Number four was a vivacious, well-looking, well-dressed, agreeable young fellow—he was a Barnacie, but on the more sprightly side of the family—and he said, in an easy way, "Oh! you had better not bother yourself about it, I think."

"Not bother myself about it!"

"No! I recommend you not to bother yourself about it."

about it. This was such a new point of view that Arthur Clebram found himself at a loss how to receive it.

"You can if you like. I can give you plenty of forms to fill up. Lots of 'em here. You can have a dozen if you life. But you'll never go on with it," said number four.
"Would it be such hopeless work? Excuse me; I am a stranger in England."

"Would it be such hopeless work? Excuse me; am a stranger in England."

"I don't say it would be hopeless," returned number four, with a frank smile. "I don't express an opinion about that; I only express an opinion about you. I don't think you'd go on with it. However, of course, you can do as you like. I suppose there was a failure in the performance of a contract, or something of that kind, was there?"

"I really don't know."

"Well! That you can find out. Then you'll f-rest,